

About NOAA Survey Marks

NOAA's 1.5 million survey marks serve as the foundation for mapping and charting in America.

There are many reasons for needing to know exact locations and elevations on the surface of the Earth. Positional information provides the foundation for many human activities, such as finding where you are or where you are going, establishing property boundaries, for many scientific and engineering applications such as constructing buildings and bridges, and to ensure the safe passage of ships. Without positional information, we would be lost in countless ways.

Since 1807, NOAA's National Geodetic Survey and its predecessor agencies have placed permanent survey marks or monuments throughout the United States. Today, a typical mark is a brass, bronze, or aluminum disk (or rod), but marks might also be prominent objects like water towers or church spires.

Today, the National Geodetic Survey's database contains information on approximately **1.5 million survey disks**, set all over the United States and its possessions. This network of precisely placed survey marks is the set of reference points used by geodesists, surveyors, and others interested in precise positioning on the Earth's surface.

Most of the commemorative marks are 10- or 12-inch diameter brass disks, but some are stainless steel. **After they are set in the ground, the accurate geographic location of the disks are determined using GPS technology** and made available on the National Geodetic Survey website.

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Full collection & history:

http://celebrating200years.noaa.gov/survey_marks/welcome.html

NOAA's National Geodetic Survey:

<http://geodesy.noaa.gov/>



NOAA survey disc at Kill Devil Hills, N.C. honoring the 100th anniversary of the first powered flight by the Wright brothers (2004).



NOAA survey disc in Salt Lake City, Utah to recognize the 2002 Winter Olympic Games.



NOAA survey disc in American Samoa celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary (2006).